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NEWS ITEMS

The managing editor, Professor S. W. Williston, has gone to the International Zoological Congress as the representative of the American Zoological Society. While the first two numbers of the Quarterly are prepared according to plans decided upon before his departure he should not be held responsible for errors and omissions in them.

The Pennsylvania Chapter sends to members just in advance of a meeting for the election of new members a circular letter stating that "at the business meeting the Committee on Nominations will report that it has approved the following persons for membership in the Chapter". The letter then gives a list of names each accompanied by a careful record of positions, degrees, contributions to research, lines of investigation pursued, and other important data. If all chapters exercised such care there would be less outside criticism that Sigma Xi elections are sometimes hasty and do not justify the ideals of the organization.

The long expected Quarter Century Record and History is finally being printed. The correction of proof, preparation of indices, and other associated duties have involved much more time than anticipated. Furthermore the material is considerably more extensive than was calculated at the start and subscribers will get a volume noticeably larger than was promised them. As announced in several circulars sent each member of the Society the edition is limited by order of the Washington convention to 200 copies above the subscriptions received. All members who have delayed sending in their subscriptions should take immediate action. Copies wanted by libraries must also be secured at once to avoid disappointment.

Certain statistical data are printed in the Quarterly for the use of members. Opposite page 28 is given a complete list of national officers of the Society of Sigma Xi with their addresses. The names of all chapter officers are given in the table on page 27, according to the data furnished in the latest chapter reports. The statistical records of chapters for the past year are incorporated in a table on page 26. A slight change in form has been made in this table. In one sense it is the continuation of the series of statistical tables printed in the convention proceedings of recent years, yet it follows the precise arrangement used in the corresponding tables of the Quarter Century Record and History and utilizes as a basis the membership totals given in that work. A careful examination of the data printed in earlier pamphlets showed certain discrepancies between different reports that made it impossible to use these data in calculating the growth and present condition of the various chapters. Accordingly the membership lists submitted by the chapters were collated and the results furnished exact data on the growth in membership of individual chapters. The first column of this table given here represents the precise number of names listed in

the membership roll of each chapter, and the grand totals show the complete present membership. That two chapters have an active membership of more than two hundred each, and ten enroll each more than one hundred active members is hardly less surprising than the aggregate membership of 8200 now listed on the records of Sigma Xi. Such figures are overwhelming evidence of the growth of the Society and exceed by far the estimates even of those most familiar with the organization.

It is evidently of some importance for the society that its records should be complete. On the other hand it is not strange that in the lapse of time and frequent change of officers as well as in the absence of permanent printed records some confusion has arisen. We are at a point where the errors may be corrected and the omissions, if any, made good. The first column in the table of membership statistics on the opposite page represents the record of membership in each chapter as obtained from an actual count of the names in the Quarter Century Record and History. It is easily possible that in the various stages of the process of making up the chapter roll and putting it into print some names may have been duplicated and others have been dropped out. In one chapter the careful checking of the list furnished in comparison with the minutes in the secretary's book and the financial record in the treasurer's book showed that forty names had been omitted from the list in print. Perhaps names have been omitted similarly in other chapters and evidently the first step towards the perfection of the Record is the verification of the total membership on December 31, 1911, as it is listed in the volume. The next series of columns represents the additions to the Society during the calendar year 1912, and this is followed by a set of columns representing the total classified membership at the close of 1912. If these figures are correct then the column of total membership for 1912 is an accurate representation of the condition of the Society at the last annual convention. The active membership as represented in the last column is taken from the secretaries' reports. It will evidently represent a more uncertain and less important figure than the total membership since the coming and going of members will cause the figures to fluctuate slightly during the year. If the chapter secretaries will undertake to check up all these figures for their individual chapters the record may be verified or corrected and thus establish as a basis for future records. Attention should be paid to the type of membership which is precisely defined by the Constitution. The record in our Quarter Century volume represents the terms under which the individual was elected, although it is evident that any individual might have been selected originally as an undergraduate member and have become successively one in any or all of the other groups of members recognized by the Constitution.